



Monday, March 10, 2014
Edition 95
www.feweek.co.uk

Time for FE tea



More than 100 FE success story students were celebrated at a House of Lords afternoon tea.

They had all been helped with £1,500 bursaries from the Helena Kennedy Foundation having come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Lady Kennedy said: "Our bursary holders are truly inspirational people and it is an honour to witness and support their rise to success. I am delighted to have presented these students with awards in acknowledgment of their achievements at university."

The event honouring 104 learners took place on Tuesday, March 4.

Dr Ann Limb, founder of the foundation in 1998, and chair of trustees, said: "Making the leap from college to university can be a big step and our foundation works with colleges across the UK to support students to overcome real disadvantage."

Lady Kennedy (front left in blue dress and black jacket) and Dr Ann Limb (right) with Helena Kennedy Foundation bursary winners at the House of Lords

Reforms signal 'death' of teen apprenticeships

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

An "enforced" employer's fee for 16 and 17-year-old apprenticeships under government funding reforms could spell the end of the programme, it has been claimed.

The move was revealed as part of a technical consultation, but with the ages currently fully-funded by government there were fears it would "kill off apprenticeships for 16 and 17 year olds."

FE consultant Mark Corney told *FE Week*: "It would take Sherlock Holmes himself to understand why they have chosen to create a mandatory cash contribution for what only amounts to about 50,000 learners.

"This will create an 18 to 24 English apprenticeship system, but it will kill off apprenticeships for 16 and 17 year olds."

The consultation document, launched on March 6, follows recommendations laid out in

the 2012 review of apprenticeships by former Dragons' Den investor Doug Richard.

Businesses would receive a one-off lump sum towards costs associated with 16 and 17-year-old apprentices under the proposal, having paid an "enforced co-investment".

"By making a direct financial contribution towards the cost of training, employers would have a greater incentive to demand relevant high-quality training and good value," it says in the consultation.

However, Mr Corney said: "Why would you think imposing any charge whatsoever on 16-year-olds will increase employer demand?"

"If you're a local authority and you're worried about 16 and 17-year-old Neets [not in education, employment or training] when the participation age goes to 18, please don't look for apprenticeships, because a mandatory cash contribution and routing the money through employer with the administrative problem that creates, I can only see reducing places, not expanding them."

Chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers Stewart Segal also expressed concerns. "We've always said there are two reasons that the reforms might affect the numbers of 16 and 17 year old apprenticeships — the bureaucracy, and the money because these apprentices are fully funded at the moment," he said.

The consultation suggests a "simple one-off payment" to be awarded to the employer after the apprentice's first three months recognising that younger apprentices "require a greater level of supervision, guidance, education, and induction into the workplace."

However Mr Segal said he did not believe this would keep employers on board. "That lump may well be a lot less than the current funding so overall there'll be less investment in those young people than the current government investment," he said.

He also said it was "worrying" that 18-year-olds would be considered separately, suggesting plans to "reduce investment

further". The consultation closes at 11.45pm on April 29. It was the second on the proposed apprenticeship reforms and a summary of the results of the first, which finished in October, were included in the new consultation document — the first time the results have been published.

They revealed that the system of funding apprenticeships by allowing employers a reduced PAYE liability, which was named as the government's preferred funding mechanism in the Autumn Statement and which forms the basis of the new consultation's proposals, had little support among stakeholders.

Even in the group where it was most popular — medium-sized businesses — the PAYE method was preferred by just one-in-four. The funding reforms could be in place for August 2016. Visit www.gov.uk to take part in the consultation.

See editor's comment on **page 4**



Balloon artistry headache for Minister **Page 3**

Edition 95

FE Week is the only newspaper dedicated to news, analysis, jobs and fun in the FE sector.

And tweet us your thoughts @feweek or with the hashtag #feweek

Editor: Chris Henwood
 Head designer: Nicky Phillips
 Sub editor: Paul Offord
 Reporters: Freddie Whittaker
 Rebecca Cooney
 Photographer: Ellis O'Brien
 Sales executive: Hannah Smith
 Administration: Victoria Boyle
 Financials: Helen Neilly
 Contributors: Barbara Spicer
 Phil Romain
 Deirdre Hughes
 Fiona Aldridge

FE Week intern: Sarah Hammill

Managing director: Shane Mann

For an annual subscription to FE Week for just £75 visit www.feweek.co.uk and click on 'subscribe' at the top of the page.

If you are interested in placing a product or job advert in a future edition please click on the 'advertise' link at the top of the page on www.feweek.co.uk or contact:

E: hannah.smith@feweek.co.uk
 T: 020 81234 778

Top Skills For The Future tweets:



@WorkFoundation

Limitations of UK appren'ships - too many going to existing employees, too few to young people, and poor in some sectors eg care



@katie_jacobs

Employees in future will be less bound to organisations. Will zero hours type contracts be the norm? How should employers react?



@ThomasKohut

I like the idea of companies as 'network orchestrators' ... Blurring the boundaries between firms, and their interactions



@aurora_european

Toby Peyton Jones on #thefutureofwork - Personal agility & resilience will be vital - esp. to young people



@KatyJones88

Good point from @francesca_local - need for vocational training systems that narrow inequality (as in other countries)

See pages 10 and 11 for more

Learning & Skills Events,
 Consultancy and Training Ltd
 161-165 Greenwich High Road
 London SE10 8JA
 T: 020 8123 4778
 E: news@feweek.co.uk

NCG loses DWP jobs contract

@PaulOfford

paul.offord@feweek.co.uk

A multi-million pound government contract to find work for long-term unemployed people has been taken off NCG (formerly Newcastle College Group).

The programme was launched by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) three years ago for private, public or voluntary organisations to help people find people jobs.

But NCG, which had been the only FE college group with a contract for the programme, has been "issued a notice of termination" by the DWP.

A DWP spokesperson said NCG's contract was the "lowest performing when assessed against a range of performance measures".

There are 40 other regional contractors and all the poor performers have been asked to produce improvement plans — apart from NCG, whose contract was terminated with 12 months' notice.

The DWP spokesperson added: "Over the next few months we will be conducting a procurement competition to identify a replacement provider.

"The notice of termination has been issued under the voluntary break clause in the contract and not for any breach of contract by NCG."

The NCG contract, for north east Yorkshire and the Humber, was delivered

through its subsidiary, Intraining, and eight subcontractors. Its Midland contracts were unaffected.

Phil Bonell (pictured), managing director of Intraining, said: "We are extremely disappointed, especially as we have made significant improvements over the last 12 months thanks to the hard work of our staff and subcontractors."

The DWP pointed out that only 7.4 per cent of unemployed people placed with NCG had been found a job they stayed in for at least 12 months (by September last year) — the worst conversion rate in the country. The national average was 10.7 per cent.

DWP paid NCG an initial £400 registration fee per person it registered. One-off "outcome" payments worth up to £3,500 per person would also have been paid to NCG whenever someone stayed in a job long-term (in most cases for at least six months).

It would then have been paid up to £350-a-month for up to 20 months each person subsequently stayed in their job. It had received 19,430 registration payments by September last year, but only 2,400 stayed in a job long enough to secure outcome payments.

An NCG spokesperson said it employed around 80 staff, either directly or via subcontractors, through its work programme contract. She said it was unlikely there would be job losses as they were all covered by TUPE regulations.



Learners could have qualifications revoked

@PaulOfford

paul.offord@feweek.co.uk

Past learners with a Warwickshire-based provider could have their qualifications taken away from them following a probe into allegations of malpractice.

Leading awarding organisation NCFE (formerly the Northern Council for Further Education) announced last month it had stopped certificating Bright Assessing course following its investigation.

The findings have not been made public, but a Bright spokesperson said it "vigorously disputes both the findings and the sanction" and that it would appeal.

And now NCFE has confirmed doubts over the validity of qualifications it has awarded for Bright's level three certificate in assessing vocational achievement.

An NCFE spokesperson said: "Based on the findings of the investigation, there is the potential that we may contact learners regarding the validity of their certificates and we will be looking at this as part of our review of our duty of care.

"We are currently working through learners on a case by case basis and will be in touch directly with anyone that we're

concerned about."

She could not say how many past learners might be affected.

It is thought the only awarding organisation currently certificating Bright is OCR, where a spokesperson said: "We are aware of the ongoing NCFE investigation and we are now in the process of carrying out our own checks."

He added that OCR would continue certificating six Bright courses, including level three and four certificates in teaching in the lifelong learning sector, while checks continued.

The Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) was also listed on Bright's website as a certificating body until the end of February, but its name has now been removed.

A spokesperson for HABC said: "In order to protect the interests of learners and in accordance with our internal policies and procedures, I confirm that Bright were immediately suspended from running any courses through HABC upon receipt of the notification of the investigation being carried out by NCFE.

"The suspension will remain in place until the outcome of Bright's appeal against NCFE's decision to withdraw its centre approval status, when HABC will consider

FE Week news in brief

Textbook regulation

Ofqual has launched a consultation on its proposals for new rules on awarding organisations endorsing textbooks.

The regulator warned the current endorsement process was undermining confidence in textbooks.

Ofqual has launched the consultation, which runs until May 6, to propose new rules to prevent potential conflicts of interest.

For example, it suggested marketing of textbooks should not suggest they contained "privileged examiner insight".

Visit the Ofqual website for more details and to take part.

HS2 college search

The hunt has begun for the main site of the new high speed rail college, Skills Minister Matthew Hancock announced on Friday (March 7).

The college, announced in January, will work with employers to offer the training to develop the proposed high speed 2 rail link.

Mr Hancock said: "Selecting a site for the new college will be the first important step in its creation." The consultation document can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/high-speed-rail-college-possible-location.

Skillsfirst buyout

Senior figures at Skillsfirst Awards have bought a majority share in the business for an undisclosed fee from former Elmfield Training director Ged Syddall.

The awarding organisation has issued more than 190,000 certificates in, for example, customer service, catering and social care, since it was launched by Mr Syddall in 2010.

Managing director Myra Wall, sales and marketing director Fraser Ingham, and operations director Cheryl Collett bought the majority shareholding in the firm.

its position further."

Bright was listed on the Skills Funding Agency's website on January 28 this year as a subcontractor for Avant Partnership, through a contract worth £171,999, and The Derbyshire Network, through a £50,000 contract.

A spokesperson for Avant Partnership said: "I can confirm that we did hold a contract with Bright. This contract reached its natural timely conclusion in February. At this point there were only six learners remaining, all of which had completed and are due to be externally verified by their awarding body (OCR).

"As this contract has concluded and there are not any further learners going forward, we do not consider that there are any actions we are required to take at this time."

The Derbyshire Network declined to comment.

The SFA said it would not be intervening, despite new guidance saying it could stop prime contractors from working with subcontractors if there were "significant irregularities" in the awarding of qualifications.

Bright declined to comment on whether its past learners could lose their qualifications.

Hancock led MPs ‘up garden path’ over quals

Agency acts on its own skills shortage

@FCDWhittaker
freddie.whittaker@feweek.co.uk

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock has been accused of “leading Parliament up the garden path” with claims to be cutting spending on qualifications that were never even eligible for public funding.

He told the House of Commons on Wednesday that more than 5,000 qualifications, including “balloon artistry and instructing pole fitness will no longer” be paid for by taxpayers.

But, having learned of the said qualifications’ learning aim reference numbers from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), *FE Week* found the two examples had never been listed for government money anyway, and so could not have had any publicly-funded adult enrolments.

Speaking in the House of Commons about reforms to vocational qualifications, which featured in *FE Week* last year and most recently two months ago with a 15-credit threshold, Mr Hancock said: “We support vocational qualifications that help people into work, so we must focus support on those that employers value.

“As a result of these reforms, qualifications

in subjects such as self-tanning, balloon artistry and instructing pole fitness will no longer attract government funding.”

His comments have been branded misleading by Shadow Skills Minister Liam Byrne, while other sector leaders have also accused the government of belittling valuable qualifications.

Mr Byrne told *FE Week*: “We all agree with the need to simplify qualifications, but this is evidence that hapless Matthew Hancock has been leading Parliament up the garden path.

“He’s either messed it up again or deliberately set out a false impression. Either way, he needs to come up with some straight answers for Parliament — and fast.”

The move, according to a BIS press release on Wednesday, meant that “nearly £200m of the adult skills budget will be re-directed towards the highest quality and most relevant qualifications”.

But Federation of Awarding Bodies chief executive Jill Lanning accused the government of misleading the public with the press release, which also mentioned said qualifications.

She said: “I think by choosing examples not eligible for funding, it has added insult to injury. It is misleading to have put them in the introduction of the press release.”

A BIS spokesperson declined to comment on the claims, which relate to the reform publication *Getting the job done*: the government’s reform plan for vocational qualifications.

However, Ms Lanning added: “We take issue with the government’s assertion that qualifications that have not met their criteria for the performance tables or for funding, such as minimum size, are automatically of poor quality.”

Association of Colleges chief executive Martin Doel said: “It’s unfortunate that there’s little understanding or recognition that some of the courses derided in this announcement are those which are important in encouraging vulnerable adults, for example those who are recovering from mental or physical health issues or redundancy, back into work-related training and into employment.”

Mr Hancock said: “We are determined to make sure that people who work hard to achieve a qualification can be sure that it is recognised as meaningful and valuable to employers and that it makes a real contribution to our long-term economic plan for Britain.”

It comes with providers still waiting for the Skills Funding Agency to publish the funding rules, rates and allocations for 2014/15.

The boss of the Education Funding Agency told MPs his organisation was taking steps to protect itself from an in-house skills shortage.

Agency chief executive Peter Lauener was grilled by the House of Commons public accounts select committee on Wednesday (March 5) following a National Audit Office warning it was in danger of becoming “overloaded” by financial constraints, staffing difficulties and an increased workload.

The agency provides funding for 16 to 19 learners and supports building and maintenance programmes for schools and sixth form colleges.

When asked by the committee whether IT and construction skills gaps in the organisation could constrain the £7.8m administration cost savings it was aiming to make, Mr Lauener said the agency was “in a fairly happy position”.

“A big thing for us is the skills development of our staff, we’re planning a lot on that over the next year,” he said.

“We’ve brought in some contractors on IT and on building skills we’ve got over 100 people doing project management and procurement.”

Mr Lauener was unwilling to specify an exact timetable for implementing the agency’s transparency and accountability systems but said the next 15 months were “absolutely critical”.

Commissioner findings add fuel to the Barnfield Federation fire

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

The FE Commissioner’s findings of his inspection of the under-fire Barnfield Federation have been published, giving another damning verdict on its leadership and governance.

Commissioner David Collins called for at least half the governors to be replaced and for “significant changes” to the federation’s leadership, following his visit in January.

His findings were made public in a letter from Skills Minister Matthew Hancock and Schools Minister Lord Nash to the Barnfield governors’ chair.

A Department for Business, Innovation and Skills spokesperson said the letter containing the commissioner’s findings had been published “due to the unique nature” of the investigation.

However, as well as being scrutinised by Mr Collins, the college has been under investigation by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Education Funding Agency (EFA), whose reports were passed onto police. Both were critical of those at the top of the college, and were passed onto Hertfordshire Police, but the force said it wouldn’t pursue a case.

A Barnfield Federation spokesperson told *FE Week* it had been, “working for some months to address the issues raised by the agency investigation, and are putting in place a set of actions which address those issues”.

Former director general of the corporation Sir Peter Birkett (pictured), who left the federation in June, said: “The reports identified human errors often found in large



complex and dynamic organisations such as Barnfield — many of the key findings were known about and planned for.

“Although the reports identified some surprises it also confirmed that the college is financially healthy with £21.5m reserves.”

The EFA and SFA reports were published late last month and revealed that Sir Peter received a number of bonuses not specified in his contract when he left — including being allowed to keep a £30,000 Audi, paid for by the college— which the reports said were “not proper use of college funds”.

The reports also showed auditors KPMG shaved £1m off college funding claims where guided learning hours did not match attendance registers.

And the commissioner found that “the governing body has not provided sufficient oversight of the corporation and the federation as its sponsor, nor has it provided adequate scrutiny and challenge of the executive team.”

Help plan support for the development of English and maths skills

The Education & Training Foundation is seeking your views on how they can help you develop your learners’ skills.

How to take part?

E-surveys - for practitioners/managers and strategic leaders

Webinar - discussing workforce development/CPD for those developing English and Maths on Wednesday 19 March (1.30-2.30pm)

Pan regional events - exploring how the impact of professional development on outcomes for learners can be captured

Birmingham 18 March; London 19 March; York 20 March

Focus groups - five focus groups around the country
To follow the consultation on Twitter use #ETF_emcon

To book a place at an event email:
Jo Byrne, joanne.byrne@slcollege.ac.uk, project administrator, emCETT

To complete one of the surveys visit: tiny.cc/ETF_emcon

Editor's comment

Ignored again

The original apprenticeship reform funding consultation ended in October, and in December the government said it would proceed with the PAYE payment model.

Yet in an annex to the latest consultation we learn that more than 90 per cent of providers and the majority of employers who responded to that first consultation did not favour the PAYE payment model.

This is not the first time the government has shunned the vast majority of funding consultation respondents.

In July 2012, the Department for Education admitted nearly 80 per cent of its consultation responses opposed the single rate for a full-time student system.

The Minister of the time ignored these concerns and introduced it anyway.

So should you respond to this latest list of 21 questions?

Yes, but this time the Minister should listen.

Chris Henwood, editor
chris.henwood@feweek.co.uk



Traffic lights warning on careers guidance progress

@FCDWhittaker
freddie.whittaker@feweek.co.uk

Not enough has been done to meet recommendations for the future of careers advice in England outlined by the National Careers Council (NCC), the watchdog has said.

In its report, *An Aspirational Nation: Achieving a culture change in careers provision*, released in June last year, the NCC made seven recommendations about improvements to the National Careers Service.

In an interim report published six months on, the NCC has used a traffic light system to rate progress made based on its recommendations, and its chair, Deirdre Hughes, has written to colleagues across the sector about the issues highlighted.

She said: "We remain fully committed to achieving an all-age careers service that needs to do more with schools in recognition that careers provision needs to be improved."

She added: "There are however two areas that concern us. The National Careers Service would benefit from having an employer-led advisory board, small in size but big in ideas for added value, reach and impact.

"More needs to be done for young people and to help schools who whilst they have statutory duty are often unsure what to do and need some support in this period of transition.

"I trust you and your colleagues will work with the National Careers Council to ensure the necessary 'culture change in careers provision' can be achieved as soon as possible.

"We will be hosting a conference in June 2014 to gather further views on progress being made."

In the interim report, the NCC has highlighted several "red" areas, where it wants to see further improvement. It said that an impartial face-to-face careers guidance offer for schools recommended in the original report would not be available until October, and that future arrangements remained vague.

The report also said not enough had been done to meet another recommendation — that impartial careers guidance formed a part of new traineeships and the 16 to 19 study programme, and also criticised the government for not seeing training and practice-sharing among teachers and key partners as part of the careers service's role.

But the report did highlight some positive steps taken by the government, and noted that the careers service was working more closely with the Career Development Institute to provide an online list of qualified career experts.

It also recognised that revised guidance for schools would "outline the role of intermediaries in bringing employers and

educators closer together, and provide examples of initiatives like Inspiring the Future that are helping to inspire young people about the world of work".

A spokesperson for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills would not comment on the individual criticisms, but said: "We value the effort the NCC is making to support the inspiration agenda and the NCS."

The NCC report came just days before Business Secretary Vince Cable, in a speech to business leaders, claimed government efforts to boost careers guidance were being thwarted by teachers' lack of knowledge about vocational education.

"There has been an argument in government about how to get the right careers advice in schools and successive governments have frankly messed this up," he said.

"But the underlying problem is, of course, that most teachers, particularly in the secondary sector, are graduates.

"They know how universities work, they know what you have to do to get an A-level, they know about UCAS forms — but they know absolutely nothing about the world of work.

"They don't know how to direct people to apprenticeships or traineeships, which we're now doing as a first stage for people."

See Deirdre Hughes's expert piece Page 13

Comments

Young Neets rise draws RPA questions

In my opinion the dedicated role at a senior level of government would be a good move, although I would like to see it wider than just the NEET cohort.

Scotland has a Youth Minister, so a priority and precedent has been set.

The internal silo policy making of individual departments has been around for as long as I can remember, however a single point of (empowered) accountability will greatly improve our collective efforts to take positive action.

Mark C

@Realtimedu
Rise in #NEET numbers & more evidence of poor #vocational & #apprenticeship career advice. Poor start for RPA

Functional Skills rejected in favour of GCSEs

I find it ironic that when Michael Gove is stating that it is fine for people who teach in schools do not have to have QTS but their experience counts, the insistence is now on GCSE only for EYE.

Do all the unqualified teachers have GCSE maths and English?

If not then perhaps we need to ensure a level playing field across all teaching areas.

Functional Skills maths and English are of far more use in supporting the application of the acquirement of skills for the younger child as they are what is being used at this development stage.

Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky all recognised the need to learn and develop according to the needs of the individual and this is most important at the earliest ages.

The sector stands to lose a lot of good teachers due to the

blinkered attitude of a government that seems to have double standards when it come to teaching our children.

Anita McKelvey

The state of pay

Personally, having worked in FE for 21 years, I've never really understood why some teachers are rewarded for delivering the same old tired sessions year on year, while blaming the students for poor results, (come on - we all know they exist) but the recently recruited teachers, who are sparkly and who clearly love what they're doing, have to trudge the long path of institutionalisation before they get their reward.

OK, it works the other way too. Shouldn't we reward excellence regardless of length of service?

A Smith

FE Week profile

Barry Sheerman ~ his story

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

The Huddersfield MP and joint chair of the Skills Commission talks to FE Week.

Within moments of going into MP Barry Sheerman’s Westminster office, numerous clues hinting at his old day job as a university professor become clear.

Political biographies, volumes of poetry and literary criticism line the walls and by the time the interview is over, a small stack of books has built up in front of me to thumb through.

And as Sheerman leaps up to show me something else, so the conversation bounces just as energetically in different directions as I learn about the different projects he’s helped to set up.

“I unfortunately got into Parliament in 1979 when Thatcher became Prime Minister, so I had 18 years in opposition,” says the Labour politician, who counts co-chair of the Skills Commission with Dame Ruth Silver among his current roles.

“I did loads of shadow minister jobs and it was so frustrating that you weren’t doing anything — so I got in the habit of starting things and gradually built up this empire of social enterprises.”

Sheerman guesses he’s on his 48th enterprise having started with a co-operative development agency in West Glamorgan, followed by a folk club and a jazz club, “and it went from there”.

The enterprise he seems most proud of is an education centre run from the home of 19th century poet John Clare in Helpston, Cambridgeshire, which he discovered was on the market seven years ago.

“We got £1.27m from Heritage Lottery, match funded it, and turned it into a splendid centre, which is both a place where you can worship John Clare, but also it’s a national centre of learning outside the classroom,” he explains.

The project has expanded into the old village pub where Clare learned to play the fiddle.

“We are going to turn that into a hub where anyone can come in through the door — and they may be a young NEET [not in education, employment or training] who has lost their way, doesn’t know what their talents are, never been given any sound advice or maybe a 43-year-old woman who has never found that spark,” says Sheerman.

“But they can come through and we use a businessman, managers, university academics, anyone who will give their time to assess them and mentor them and point them in the right direction.”

Middlesex-born Sheerman, aged 73, has long been an advocate of the FE sector (he’s a former chair of the House of Commons Education and Skills select committee, which has since focussed on education) and says his interest dates back to own experience of education and careers advice.

“I went to a grammar school, it was very posh, and most of the kids from the more working class background dropped out at 16, and I came top in English, top in history and bottom in everything else, so I dropped out,” he said.

A careers adviser told him to try and get into the chemical industry — “he said the future was men in white coats,” says Sheerman.

“So I ended up foolishly being in the paint industry and most of the time I got a day off to study chemistry and paint technology, most of the time with that day off, I went in and was reading economics — and I suddenly got this love of reading about economics.

“And a couple of nice people in the chemical industry said: ‘You should go back and get an education, you shouldn’t be here’.

“So I sold my scooter, I started a painting and decorating business, I cleaned windows, I bought and sold in Petticoat Lane, and I worked my way through my A-levels in a year at Kingston Technical College, and got a scholarship to the LSE to study politics and economics. So that was my liberation.”

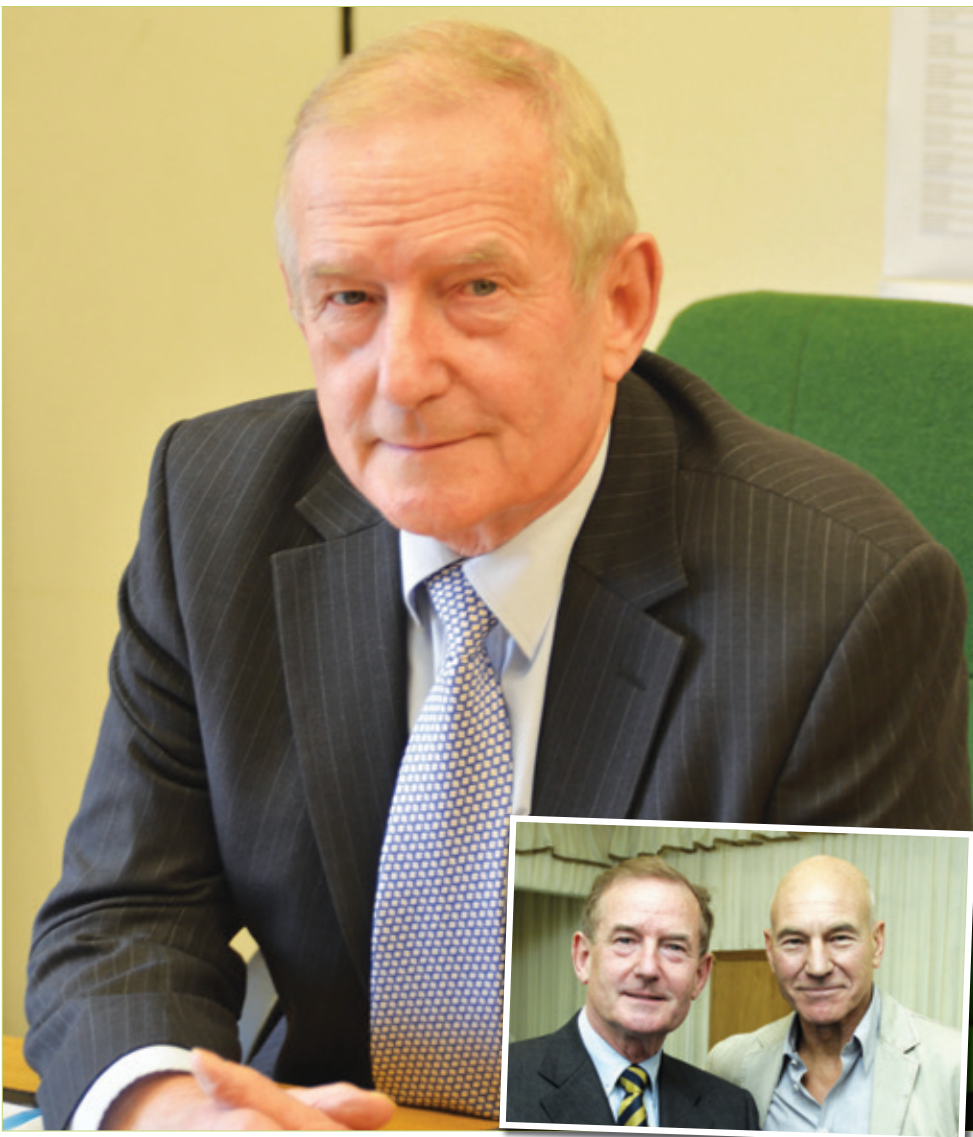
Sheerman married wife Pamela in 1965, and his best man was ex-Labour MP and former UKIP Euro MP Robert Kilroy-Silk (“I keep that quiet though,” says Sheerman with a chuckle).

Sheerman went on to do a Masters in political sociology, and was taught by Ralph Miliband, father of Labour leader Ed Miliband, before taking up a lectureship at the University of Wales in Swansea in 1966.

“ I wanted to change the world — so I got on the local council ”

He taught economics and politics in Swansea for 12 years and clearly relished it, but tragedy turned his attention to “changing the world”.

“I was sitting there congratulating myself, as kid from a reasonably working class background, youngest of five, at being a university teacher, we had this lovely cottage on the Gower Peninsula with a couple of acres, toy farm breeding donkeys,” he says.



Inset: Sheerman with actor Patrick Stewart, who unveiled part of the John Clare centre in 2009

“It was a really self-congratulatory phase of my life, and then our first baby died at birth.

“In those days they took the baby, it disappeared — my wife was told the baby had been incinerated, I was told it was put in a mass grave.”

The baby, a boy who would have been named Luke, was born in November.

“Anyway, I did this strong partner act, I think, I tried to support my wife,” says Sheerman.

But by the New Year he realised he was struggling.

“I’d lost all my energy, I thought I had leukaemia, I kept getting a sore throat and losing my voice,” he says.

“My wife conned me into going to the university doctor, who gave me a total check-

up and told me: ‘There’s nothing wrong with you physically, but men, as well as women, go through a period of reflection after they lose a child,’ — they didn’t say depression then.

“And that was the trigger, asking: ‘What do you really want to do with this life? Spend your life thinking you’re a little working class boy who has made it good... or is what I really want to do in my heart something more active?’

“And out of that I decided I didn’t want to write about politics or teach about politics, I wanted to change the world — so I got on the local council.”

Sheerman ran unsuccessfully for a seat in Taunton in 1974, before being elected in Huddersfield in 1979.

He now lives just outside Huddersfield, and he and Pamela now have four children, Lucy, 43, Madlin, 41, John, 35, and Verity, 32.

As he enthuses to me about crowdfunding, an online system where individuals donate money to help get businesses and projects off the ground, I suspect there will be more social enterprises to come.

And his commitment to promoting FE remains unwavering.

“It gave me my second chance,” he says.

“And I only knew about it because people were kind enough to take time to say ‘Look...’ to me, and that’s really nice, when you see someone who is slightly off course.

“So I suppose what inspires me is when I look at kids who are like me.”

It’s a personal thing

What’s your favourite book?
I read Caitlin Moran’s How to be a Woman, and I just read Giles Coren’s How to Eat Out. My favourite book as a student was Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays by Michael Oakeshott

What’s your pet hate?
I can’t think of anything I hate. Hating is hard, isn’t it? I’m with Giles Coren. I hate people who go to restaurants and pay a lot of money for heated up beef. It’s such a waste of money

What did you want to be when you grew up?
I suppose on reflection I am a frustrated writer

Who, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party?
John Clare [English poet who died in 1864] and Victorian slavery-abolition and factory reform campaigner Richard Oastler

What do you do to switch off from work?
Play with my grandchildren — I’ve got nine under 11. I love walking and reading poetry.

Survey paints ‘worrying’ picture on employer contributions

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

A survey revealing employers were unwilling to contribute to the cost of apprenticeships was described as “worrying” by FE sector bodies, who fear reforms could cause a drop in apprenticeship numbers.

As the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) looks at rerouting apprenticeship funding directly through employers so they can pay for training, its research found many would cut back on apprenticeships depending on the size of their contribution to costs.

The majority of the employers surveyed were unable to even suggest a reasonable price for training.

The research investigated employer responses to apprenticeship funding reforms laid out in the 2012 Richard Review, which included options to fund the programmes through direct payment to employers, allowing employers to recoup costs through their PAYE return and through an employer contribution to training costs.

Chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers Stewart Segal (pictured) said: “We urge ministers to take notice of their own findings.

“This latest BIS survey confirming an employer split is further proof that the changes are neither employer-driven nor supported by the majority of employers.”

The study was carried out through

39 “semi-structured” interviews across the engineering, construction, retailing, hospitality, and financial services sectors.

“We are very disappointed this new evidence has not been used in determining the next steps, particularly when ministers must understand the risks involved,” said Mr Segal.

“The other worrying aspect of the research is the confirmation... that a mandatory cash contribution from employers towards the cost of the training... may well reduce the number of businesses offering apprenticeships.

“Adding to the costs and complexity for employers simply doesn’t make sense.”

Teresa Frith (pictured), senior skills policy manager for the Association of Colleges (AoC), said: “We have always been supportive of putting employers in the lead of the decision-making process within apprenticeships, but not in the centre of the funding mechanism and this research would seem to support this view.”

All the employers in the survey were already delivering apprenticeships.

“A worrying finding is that even these employers would reduce, or even walk away from apprentices if they are asked to co-finance,” said Ms Frith.

“This suggests the changes will make it more difficult to attract new employers.”

Fiona Aldridge, head of learning for work at the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (Niace), said: “There is a real risk



fewer apprenticeships will be delivered.”

She acknowledged employers already made contributions to apprenticeships through apprentice wages.

But, she said: “Many have got used to a model where they have not had to make a cash contribution towards their training.

“In order to encourage employers to see this cash contribution as a valuable investment in their business, training needs to be developed in such a way that... employers recognise the contribution to the success and growth of their business.”

The findings come in the same week as the second round of trailblazers, employer groups designing the standards for their industries’



apprenticeships, was announced by the government.

The AoC, AELP and Niace all welcomed the survey’s findings that employers were pleased with the current content and scope of apprenticeships, and their role in them.

However Mr Segal said this raised the question of whether employers really did want to design the programme.

“Employers in general were... not actively looking to increase the amount of influence they had over these features,” he said.

“But we’ve been constantly told that the lack of employer ownership over standards is a major reason for implementing the reforms.”

New pressure group set up to fight for apprentice rights

@PaulOfford
paul.offord@feweek.co.uk

A new pressure group for apprentices has been launched by the National Union of Students (NUS).

It said the National Society for Apprentices would champion the rights of apprentices and represent their views to government.

An NUS spokesperson told *FE Week*: “We have been working on developing a similar organisation for apprentices for a number of years and the society is open to all apprentices across the country, from any kind of provider, on any framework.”

She said the new organisation was needed because, “our research into apprentices and their identity indicates that apprentices sometimes see themselves primarily as apprentices, sometimes as workers and sometimes as students.”

“This was echoed during the apprentice conversation event last year, apprentices felt they should participate in NUS events but also have their own space to develop their own ideas,” she said.

Its interim leadership team will be made up of 15 senior figures from a range of organisations involved with apprenticeships — including the NUS, public services union Unison, Leeds City College Student Union, City & Guilds, and providers ACT Training and First4Skills.



It is chaired by Dr Peter Lavender OBE (pictured), chair of the corporation of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College.

He said: “It’s humbling to think that there will be a new voice for almost a million apprentices across the UK.”

Raechel Matthey, NUS vice president (union development), said: “It’s high time we started to champion our apprentices by tackling exploitative practices within the industry.”

All providers that train apprentices will be invited to join the society. After they join, their apprentices will be entitled to apprentice extra discount cards, which were launched by the NUS in 2012 but will now be managed by the society.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will promote the society and the discount card on its website.

A permanent leadership team for the apprentice society is due to be chosen in the summer.

FE Associates

FE Associates has a growing team of dedicated curriculum and funding education experts who can help you develop a more efficient and effective curriculum, working with you to identify, support and implement change, in-year and for the years to come.

We can help you:

- analyse and identify your curriculum planning priorities for 2014/15
- measure and mitigate the impact of funding changes for 2014/15
- evaluate the effect on your future funding allocations

FE Associates is also a preferred supplier of interim managers and brokerage specialist. For the total solution please call (01823) 337655 or email enquiries@feassociates.com www.feassociates.com



Gove providers comments ‘not borne out by facts’

@FCDWhittaker
freddie.whittaker@feweek.co.uk

Education Secretary Michael Gove has been challenged by the FE sector to back up his claims that “providers force employers to take whatever training they happen to want to offer”.

Both the Association of Colleges (AoC) and Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) were critical of comments he made during a speech at the McLaren Technology Centre, in Woking, Surrey (pictured).

Mr Gove said reforms to the apprenticeship funding system, based on recommendations from the 2012 review by former Dragon’s Den investor Doug Richard, would ensure providers could “demand higher quality from whatever training provider they choose, rather than giving it to providers who force employers to take whatever training they happen to want to offer.”

Teresa Frith, AoC skills policy manager, said: “We don’t recognise the description as set out by the Secretary of State.

“Colleges work closely with employers to ensure the apprenticeships they provide fit with what the employers need.”

And Stewart Segal, AELP chief executive, said: “The minister’s comments on Doug Richard’s recommendations are not borne out by the facts.

“Employers are in the driving seat of the current system. They choose who to employ as apprentices, they choose the training pro-



gramme and they are involved in the assessment all the way through the programme.

“There are a very wide range of providers from which the employer can choose and there is no ‘force’ involved in agreeing to the apprenticeship training on offer.

“The employer makes a business decision based on the costs and benefits including paying the apprentices’ wages and meeting some of the costs of the training such as providing mentors, coaches and training facilities.

“If the employer feels that they are not getting a return on the investment, they simply won’t engage in the programme.”

He added: “Previous surveys from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department for Education [DfE] have also indicated high employer satisfaction rat-

ings for providers.”

Mr Gove’s speech, delivered on Monday, March 3, was on the future of vocational education.

And, just months after the DfE announced it would be cutting funding for full-time 18-year-olds to 17.5 per cent less than that of their 16 and 17-year-old classmates, he said: “We changed the funding of education for students between the ages of 16 and 18 to make it equal for all, whatever qualifications and courses they took — overturning a status quo which favoured the purely academic.

“We also changed the demands we make of students after the age of 16, so all students — whether they are studying more practical or more academic courses — are increasingly expected to pursue maths beyond GCSE.”

Apprentice boss among offenders

At least one apprentice employer was among the first batch to be “named and shamed” as the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) gets tough on national minimum wage offenders.

Peter Oakes, of Peter Oakes Ltd, Macclesfield; Lisa Maria Cathcart, of Salon Sienna, Manchester; Mohammed Yamin, of Minto Guest House, Edinburgh; Anne Henderson, of Chambers Hairdressers, Middlesbrough; and Ruzi Ruzyyev, a car wash operator in Carmarthen, South Wales, were all said to have underpaid.

A BIS spokesperson said Mr Oakes neglected to pay £3619.70 to two workers, Ms Cathcart neglected to pay £1760.48 to one worker, Mr Yamin neglected to pay £808.56 to one employee and Ms Henderson and Mr Ruzyyev neglected to pay £452.22 and £225.38, respectively, to one worker each.

However, it was not disclosed which had offended over apprentice pay, which is legally at least £2.68 an-hour.

The BIS spokesperson said: “We do not disclose information on the identity or status of the workers.”

She added that the five cases had been “thoroughly investigated by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs”.

It comes just weeks after the Low Pay Commission recommended that the apprentice minimum wage should go up 5p from October. A BIS spokesperson said the recommendation would be considered.

TRIBAL

working as one

Your agenda is our agenda!

Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW)

SSW funding allows colleges and other providers to design a bespoke training package that meets the needs of their local employers. Tribal have been supporting providers in this area for some time and are ideally placed to respond to the new flexibilities.

We have produced a **suite of accredited learning resources** (QCF units and full qualifications) that enable providers to purchase ready-made solutions to meet employer demand.

In some instances, we may be able to **support you with delivery** using our own experienced delivery team.

Are you curriculum planning with the new 15 credit threshold in mind?

Tribal have a wide range of programmes that meet the new minimum credit criteria for ASB funding. What’s more, we are working hard with various awarding organisations to develop qualifications that will be fit for the future. Talk to us to find out more.



For more information, visit www.tribalgroup.com/publishing

To arrange an informal chat with one of our regional business development managers email publishing@tribalgroup.com or call us on **01904 550110**.

Apprentices tell of careers guidance problems in ministerial debate

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

Apprentices from across the country aired their views on the programme at a debate in Central London.

Reporter Rebecca Cooney went along to watch those at the centre of National Apprenticeship Week have their say.

The first ever apprentice debate was organised by the Industry Apprenticeship Council (IAC) alongside the Voice of Apprenticeships conference held by Apprenticeships for England on Tuesday (March 4).

It was held in the former debating chamber of the Greater London Assembly, in County Hall.

The debate was led by founding IAC member and third year Vauxhall apprentice Lizzie Moffat, who thanked Skills Minister Matthew Hancock for attending.

She said: "Events like this are so important for you to make your voice heard.

"We have achieved so much, but we can achieve so much more with the help of government and industry."

Many apprentice delegates said there was an issue with the way apprenticeships were perceived.

One delegate said: "When I left school, the idea I had of apprenticeships was this old fashioned idea about being financially tied to an employer for four years in a craft or industry, I didn't know it was more than that."

Another apprentice added that there were problems with how modern apprenticeships were seen by parents and teachers.

"At the moment I think apprenticeships are the 'last resort' in many people's eyes, they're a second chance not a first choice," he said.

Another delegate agreed, saying: "Schools see university as the best thing — they think it's looks best for them if you go to uni, so that's the only option they push."

One of the major themes of the event was careers guidance as many delegates complained they had not been made aware of apprenticeships at school.

"I was at sixth form," one apprentice told the room. "And every Wednesday afternoon was dedicated to supporting you to fill out your UCAS form to go to university — if you didn't turn up, you got detention."

"When I said I didn't want to go to uni, they brought in a careers adviser — and even she didn't know about apprenticeships."

The experience was reflected by many who said that not only did schools prioritise universities, they did not seem to know about the other options.

One apprentice said: "I think it's really important

that we should be going to our employers and telling them we want to go and tell school students about it ourselves."

Another said this had been very successful when she had returned to her old school to spread the word.

However, one apprentice with Fujitsu said: "Fujitsu has a project planned for 2014 to get apprentices talking in as many schools as possible.

"I think it's a great idea, but we have had rejections from schools when we've asked to come in, they don't want us. It's ridiculous, but it happens."

Apprenticeships should also be promoted in Job Centres, one delegate said, pointing out that school-leavers were not the only people who could benefit from the programme.

Another topic which drew heated debate was the issue of whether apprentices should be represented by the National Union of Students (NUS).

Kicking off the conversation, Ms Moffat said: "By all means we can keep up to date with them, but what we're doing is completely different to university."

One apprentice agreed.

"We're working, we're not in education, so our experience of life is totally different," she said.

Another said he did not believe apprentices would be regarded in the same way as university students and said he did not want to be part of the "little brother" arm of the NUS.

However, another delegate said: "You are shooting yourselves in the foot if you distance yourselves from students — we may be working, but we are all students and currently we are eligible for membership of the NUS.

"Pulling away from the biggest organisation, with the reputation it's got, will damage the chance of apprenticeships being known alongside universities."

Every apprentice who spoke was positive about their apprenticeship and the opportunities it offered them, and in a show of hands, the majority said they were hoping to take their learning on to higher apprenticeship level.

Ben Pike (pictured below), director at QA, which sponsored the event, said: "This is one of the most exciting things for me — it's not about apprenticeships versus a degree,

because apprenticeships can be another way to a degree, if you want them to be."

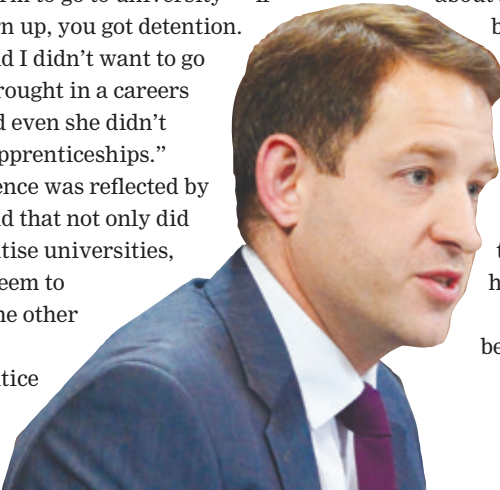
He also thanked the apprentices for their contributions.

"One of the most important things for us is to hear from you," he said.

Mr Hancock said the debate had been "fascinating" and "useful" and praised the apprentices for the articulate arguments they had put forward.



Debate host Lizzie Moffat with other apprentices



Jobs for the boys?

@RebeccaKCooney
rebecca.cooney@feweek.co.uk

Young women are being discouraged from becoming apprentices because the programme is seen as male-orientated, a study has found.

Research by City & Guilds found that women were also more likely than men to be steered away from careers like IT and engineering, and towards fields such as care, teaching or nursing.

The survey of more than 2,000 young professionals showed that a third of men were encouraged to take up an apprenticeship, compared to just 17 per cent of women.

City & Guilds chief executive Chris Jones said: "With skills gaps blighting so many industries in the UK, alongside stubbornly high levels of youth unemployment, we should be worried if industries, or indeed different training programmes, are regarded as 'male' or 'female'.

"This needs to change. Young people need to know about all of the career opportunities available, so that no career is closed off to them."

The gender difference between the advice received was most obvious in the construction industry, where only 0.6 per cent of women were encouraged to make it

their career compared to 12 per cent of men, while men were four times more likely to be encouraged to study engineering than woman.

The findings reflected the experiences of apprentices who spoke at the apprenticeship debate on March 4.

One apprentice told the room: "I'm on an engineering apprenticeship with 100 other apprentices and 90 per cent of them are boys."

She added: "Girls don't feel that they can do it, because they're not told they can."

It came as Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg invited female apprentices in Stem (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects to Parliament as part of International Women's Day.

Mr Clegg said: "National Apprenticeship Week gives us a good opportunity to celebrate the fantastic contribution apprentices make to our society.

"That is why I am pleased to celebrate women in Stem and encourage more girls to look at apprenticeships in this area. Liberal Democrats in government have helped create over a million and a half new apprenticeships across the country.

"It is important we work together to secure their future and Britain's long term success: building a stronger economy and fairer society for this generation and the next."



Matthew Hancock answers questions in County Hall's debate chamber

Awards at Voice of Apprenticeships dinner



Angela Middleton, chief executive of MiddletonMurray (blonde hair, front row, centre) with her management team

Apprenticeship providers were honoured at a gala dinner at the London Film Museum as part of National Apprenticeship Week.

The black tie event was also part of the two-day Voice of Apprenticeships conference. The awards and dinner were organised by Apprenticeships4England

Award winners included Positive Outcomes, Baltic Training, Norse, 3AAA, Babcock,

MiddletonMurray, First4Skills and Burnley College.

Lindsay McCurdy, chief executive of Apprenticeships4England, said: "The conference and gala dinner were hugely successful. It was good to see people letting their hair down into the early hours celebrating apprenticeships and I'm very proud of all the award winners."



Access Success with OCN London

OCN London is the largest QAA approved Access Validating Agency in the country, with 240 courses and registering 6,000 learners per year.

With an experienced team of curriculum development specialists and a flexible process for centre approval and course recognition, we are perfectly placed to help you start up or expand your Access to HE provision.

Benefits of working with OCN London:

- Training in assessment and internal moderation practice
- Help with assignment briefs and grade guidance
- Creative dialogue with External Moderators
- One-to-one advice about the new QAA specification
- Regular briefings and updates on Access to HE provision
- Competitive learner registration charges
- Web-based learner registration and a bespoke system for recording credit claims

To find out how you can start up Access or expand your current Access provision, call **Marisa Castellini** on **020 7689 5638** or visit **ocnlondon.org.uk**

Annual Access to HE Conference 2014

OCN London are holding their national conference in London on 1st October 2014. Keynote speakers will address delegates, and workshops will support Access staff development. This is your opportunity to get up-to-date information about the Access to HE programme. For further details email **Michelle Wood**, **m.wood@ocnlondon.org.uk** tel: **020 7689 5640**.

Technology takes centre stage on future talks a

@FCDWhittaker

freddie.whittaker@feweek.co.uk

Technology dominated the debate at a conference arranged to discuss the future of the UK skills sector.

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills and Work Foundation's Skills for the Future conference was held at the headquarters of accountants Deloitte in central London last Monday (March 3).

The event was used to officially launch a report by the commission called The Future of Work: Jobs and Skills in 2030, and many of the conference speakers spoke about how technology is becoming a more dominant force in the skills world.

In his keynote speech, Skills Minister Matthew Hancock said: "We all know that an effective skills system is an economic necessity. That is not new. But what is new is that it is becoming more important than ever."

He used the example of WhatsApp, a smartphone instant messaging service which employs just 55 people which was recently bought by Facebook for £11.4bn — around the same value of clothing brand Gap, which has 135,000 employees.

Mr Hancock said: "It is a sign of the times that technology and globalisation are changing the shape of the labour market, and it is, to me, an extreme version of the argument that has run that the return on skills is higher and that the labour market needs to promote and policy needs to support a high-skill economy."

"As the number of jobs grows in the economy, we also need to make sure that young people can get those jobs. It is absolutely vital in a world where youth unemployment rose even in the run-up to 2004 to 2008. At the moment something is wrong here and we need to address this."

He said the government and businesses had to work together to address the skills gap England is facing.

He said: "I want to talk about the link between employment and skills, and to argue that employers, where they can't find the skilled staff they need, part of the problem is because our system has lacked rigour and responsiveness to their needs. I want to explain our response and about how we can tackle this gap and suggest that we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do so."

"The government cannot act alone because high-quality skills provision involves employers, because it is necessarily and by definition vocational and employers cannot act alone because it is important that people are brought together on the journey to make sure it works for everyone."

Shadow Skills Minister Liam Byrne also spoke about technology, and criticised the government

for failing to be realistic about the state of the jobs market.

He said: "The government would like you to think that it is all fine, that all is well in the jobs market, there is now plenty of work to go around. As someone who started work behind a fry station in McDonald's, I am someone who believes that any work is better than no work."

"I think all of us here would agree that a good job is better than a bad job, and right now there are quite simply not enough good jobs to go around."

"We now live in a country where the great wage crash is producing almost as much damage as the great financial crash a few years ago. I think it is the defining issue with our economy of our times."

He added: "Our ability to combine technology, whether it's processing power, cheap sensors, robotics networks, social media, big data, now means we are at an inflection point in our ability to combine and recombine technology in a way which allows us to do new things."

"We are beginning to see extraordinary innovations from Google's driverless cars now being tested in San Francisco, to better diagnostics of cancer. There is now enough technology in a Nissan Leaf car to render the car a fly-by-wire robot, which is the kind of technology which in the coming years is going to revolutionise the

"I think all of us here would agree that a good job is better than a bad job, and right now there are quite simply not enough good jobs to go around" — Liam Byrne

logistics industry.

"General Electric already make robots which can climb and repair wind turbines, Future Advisor uses artificial intelligence which is strong enough to offer personalised financial advice."

"Some economists at the Oxford Martin School just before Christmas put a lot of this together and drew the conclusion that up to 47 per cent of jobs in our economy today will be automated over the next 10 years."

"First it was blue collar jobs, and now it is white collar jobs too. This is going to present policy makers and people like you with some of the most

"As the number of jobs grows in the economy, we also need to make sure that young people can get those jobs" —



Above: Skill Minister Matthew Hancock

Colleges to be offered to take part in T

A plan to pay colleges to act as guinea pigs for new technical qualifications due to be introduced in the autumn was unveiled by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock at the Skills for the Future conference.

Mr Hancock used his speech to announce that eight institutions would become trailblazers for the new technical baccalaureate, or "Tech Bacc".

He said: "From 2016, a new set of approved qualifications will be taught, and with only those winning the support of universities or employers included in performance tables."

"These include the new tech level qualifications, the core of the Tech Bacc, which will be taught from this autumn giving high quality alternative to A-levels, and each one has to be endorsed by employers."

"I am delighted today to be able to announce new Tech Bacc trailblazers. We have eight post 16 schools and colleges which have agreed to develop their technical subjects with local employers, we are funding them to explore how their courses can reflect the real world of work and raise quality even further."

The new qualification, which will

difficult public policy challenges over the next decade."

In the commission's report, trends which will shape the future of the UK jobs and skills market are examined. It points to a growing economically-active older population, increased income uncertainty and growing diversity, along with big changes in the way people work.

The report emphasises the likelihood that

technology will "replicate the judgement and experience of human workers" and an ensuing "skills activism", forcing the government to increase budgets to re-skill people to deal with a "rapid growth" in unemployment.

It talks about online platforms becoming the "channel of choice" for education and training providers, and an increase in requirement for company-specific qualifications as a condition

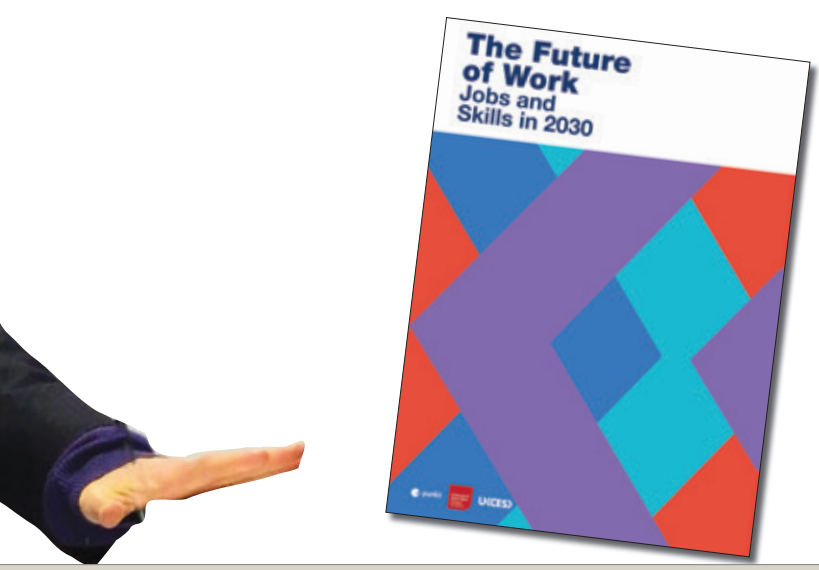


Shadow Skills Minister Liam Byrne

As politicians clash at 2030 skills report launch

Number of jobs grows in any, we also need to make young people can get those

Matthew Hancock



Offered carrot Tech Bacc pilot

count towards college and sixth form league tables, has been described by organisations including the Association of Colleges and the Association of School and College Leaders in the past as “a step in the right direction” towards raising the profile of vocational education.

To complete a Tech Bacc, learners will need a “high quality” level three vocational qualification, a core maths level three qualification, which would include AS-level maths, and an extended written project.

The Tech Bacc will be

of employment.

Mr Hancock added: “In the UK we stagnate and too many of our youngest generation are leaving education without essential skills. But just as important as the quantum skills, too often our young people have the wrong skills.

“If the question is why do we have youth unemployment and at the same

introduced for courses beginning in September, but will not count towards performance tables until January 2017.

The Department for Education (DfE), which will run the trailblazers scheme, has not yet announced which institutions will be involved in the pilot, when it will take place, or how much it will cost.

A spokesperson said no further details could be given at this stage, but that an announcement would take place soon.

time employer demand for skills, I think the answer lies in the structure of the skills system, which has produced young people with low skills and the wrong skills, and we shouldn't be surprised then if employers cannot get the right people.

“The responsibility with solving that problem lies squarely with us. We have got to fix it.”

Warning of ‘broken’ careers guidance



From left: Toby Peyton Jones, Sean Coughlan and Mark Keese

Better communication between providers and employers is needed as young people turn to technology to figure out their futures, according to Siemens HR director Toby Peyton-Jones.

Speaking during a panel debate during the conference, Mr Peyton-Jones, also a commissioner with UK Commission for Employment and Skills, said: “Today the careers advice system is, from my point of view, broken. There needs to be more collaboration between education institutions and employers.

“It is about that transition into the workplace as well. Data will be available to young people like never before, and I think there will be a comparethemarket.com-style approach [to careers advice] too.

“They will be much more empowered and if we can support that with much more collaboration and better vocational routes into work, then I think careers advice will become much more meaningful.”

Mark Keese, head of employment analysis and policy at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, said: “All of us, and young people more generally will be using information technology to a greater extent to look for jobs and what they need but we should not forget there are still a lot of young people from disadvantaged groups who do not even know what they want to do.”

Business ‘needs clarity’ on vocational education

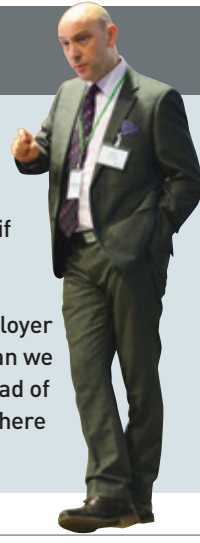
Consistency and clarity are key to the improvement of vocational education, top business leaders have claimed.

Arla Foods HR consultant Christopher Edwards (pictured), Albatross Group owner Sean Taggart and Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce chair Clive Memmott joined a panel debate on the future of employer demand for skills.

Mr Edwards said: “There is a red mist out there of every Tom, Dick and Harry trying to sell me this and that apprenticeship, and we need clarity.”

And Mr Taggart said a commitment to employer “ownership” of skills should continue after the 2015 election if another party takes control.

He said: “If we agree that employer ownership is the way forward, can we please stick with it for a bit instead of changing our minds as soon as there is a change in government.”





FILL THE SKILLS GAP

HELP THE UK'S WORKFORCE BY OFFERING THEM A RANGE OF QUALIFICATIONS FROM ACTIVE IQ.

We are experts in providing quality qualification solutions for businesses like you to not just improve the performance of your education offering, but also help you stand out from the crowd.

WE OFFER A WIDE RANGE OF QUALIFICATIONS AND APPRENTICESHIPS SUITABLE FOR A VARIETY OF INDUSTRIES. SO, HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

   0845 688 1278 activeiq.co.uk/skillsgap

Behind the scenes of National Apprenticeship Week

It's five big days in the calendar for apprenticeships and Barbara Spicer explains not only what happened before and during National Apprenticeship Week, but also how it aims to attract more employers to the programme.

One week: more than 1,000 events, well on track to beat last year's record, and trending on Twitter.

Unless you've been living in a cave, you'll be aware, by now, of what I'm talking about.

Because as you know, this is the seventh year of National Apprenticeship Week (NAW).

It's the week when all eyes are on apprenticeships — when we work with the sector to celebrate apprenticeship talent, skills, achievements and successes and the positive impact they have on individuals and businesses.

A huge amount of effort goes into the week each year, not just here at the Skills Funding Agency, National Apprenticeship Service and National Careers Service, but right across the FE sector and across industry too, ensuring that everything is ready and raring to go on day one.

Throughout the week we promoted apprenticeships at all levels from entry to work to degree level study and this year, for the first time, the recently-launched traineeship programme.

We demonstrated how apprenticeships and

“It's fair to say many of the greatest success stories of National Apprenticeship Week are small and medium-sized enterprises”

traineeships make financial sense for business and are great for personal careers.

But, as the saying goes, it's all in the preparation.

And I for one know that behind the scenes the ground work has been ongoing for several months.

We've put real effort into making sure that our stakeholders have all the tools they need to successfully communicate this week with consistent messaging, giving maximum impact to the National Apprenticeship Week campaign.

Meanwhile, research on apprenticeships has been under-way to support the sell-in of stories to the media, in different formats, way ahead of the week itself and helping to generate record levels of coverage.

We tap into every digital channel we can — Pinterest, Vine, Storify, apprentice.tv — using apprenticeship good news to the maximum,



while in recent weeks staff here have worked closely with the Deputy Prime Minister's office to film the all-important video that launched the week itself.

Yet I'm well aware that it's thanks to the support of colleges, training organisations, employers and all our partners — many doing their own thing through YouTube videos and social media — that NAW is so incredibly successful.

Their support is fundamental in ensuring we have all the benefits of a consistent, national campaign with the tremendous energy that regional engagement brings.

We have some great household names behind apprenticeships — Jaguar Land Rover, the BBC and BT to name a few.

We are seeing more support coming through from small businesses and it's fair to say many of the greatest success stories of NAW are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Did you know that nearly a third of SMEs are planning to take on apprentices as a core part of their growth strategy? The week also saw the launch of the SME apprenticeship mentoring service (apprenticemakers.org.uk) which connects SMEs new to apprenticeships to experienced SMEs who can offer free advice and support.

As I wrote this, NAW 2014 was still unfolding and I'd like to share some of my favourite stories so far: Manchester City footballer Jesus Navas planted trees with a local apprentice, the Royal Opera House tweeted its support for NAW 2014 to its 92k followers (and donated its venue for the international apprenticeship conference), while Transport for London tweeted announcing free entry for apprentices to the London Transport Museum.

Back to hard facts. New for this year was the Pledgeometer where, for the first time, employers could pledge their apprentice job vacancies in the run up to and during the week.

And at the end of the week, in a fitting finale, came the Minister's announcement of the grand total of just how many employers came forward to offer real apprenticeship opportunities that will make a genuine difference to people's lives, which is what it's all about.

Barbara Spicer, interim chief executive, Skills Funding Agency

The DNA of good apprenticeships

As the sector celebrates apprenticeships, Phil Romain looks at what makes for a good one.

My passion for apprenticeships stems from my own experiences.

I was fortunate to have had an outstanding apprenticeship in a company where many of the directors and senior managers were ex-apprentices themselves.

This led me to a career in engineering, to managing a top apprenticeship programme, to writing one of the first modern apprenticeship frameworks and eventually to being the national lead for apprenticeships with Ofsted.

I started my apprenticeship when they were considered established career paths, something many young people undertook when they left school.

The Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw's Annual Report stated that apprenticeships need to improve, but let's start with a reality check.

“Some apprenticeship schemes I have inspected are world-beaters and, dare I say, better than Germany's — but far too many are not”

When I wrote the first modern apprenticeship for shipbuilding, apprenticeships were rarely mentioned. Most people would say things like: “apprenticeships — what a shame there aren't any now.”

Thankfully, times have changed and National Apprenticeship Week provides an opportunity to promote their benefits.

Around half a million people started an apprenticeship last year and places are fiercely competitive.

Some apprenticeship schemes I have inspected are world-beaters and, dare I say, better than Germany's — but far too many are not.

So I want to look under the skin at the DNA of good apprenticeships and ask what it is that is unmistakably characteristic of the good.

Good apprenticeships offer structured, high quality training.

To some extent simply being in work will make a difference, but relying on a form of absorption by association is not enough.

Apprentices' skills and competence need planning.

I was lucky with my apprenticeship. There was no hiding place in the workshops and design offices, I had to meet with key customers, communicate with senior managers, give presentations, and support a plethora of other activities while learning to manufacture complex systems to exacting standards.



And what drove this? Two things: a dedicated employer that was involved from the top, and training staff with the skills to plan and facilitate good training.

Encouragingly, some providers are acknowledging that their staff play a pivotal role facilitating the training and development of apprentices.

They are moving away from the simple assessment of a technical qualification to the development of the individual — planning and measuring improvements in technical skills, confidence, teamwork, customer relationships, independence, reliability and communication. These are the critical characteristics valued by employers.

Inspectors often comment on the lack of employer involvement at an apprentice's progress review.

An employer with a clear plan of how their apprentice will develop the skills they need will be present, and vocal, at a progress review.

They will want to know what skills their apprentice has developed since their last review and the progress they are making. If an employer is not interested in their progress then something fundamental is wrong.

The common thread among good apprenticeships is the attention given to developing apprentices' skills and knowledge at work as well as outside of it.

And the people best placed to do this are employers, through planning and support with mentors and experienced staff.

Soon employers will be in the driving seat. Or if you are as old as I am, back in the driving seat.

When I managed an apprenticeship programme I was without doubt in control. Recruiting, commissioning training, designing the programme, and selecting the best local college to provide the courses I needed.

But the DNA of good apprenticeships will not change — the characteristics of the best will be the same.

Our evidence from last year's inspections shows little difference in the performance of different types of provider.

They often get the off-the-job training right, but improvements are needed to provide high quality, structured work-based training.

So, regardless of where the funding comes from, the challenge remains. Fortunately there are some excellent examples available and we need to learn from them.

Phil Romain, apprenticeships national lead, Ofsted

FE Week experts

How far have we gone in achieving a careers guidance ‘culture change’?

Six months after the National Careers Council called for a “culture change” in careers guidance, Deirdre Hughes, in light of a new report from the council, gives an overview of what has changed.

In June 2013 the National Careers Council, set up by government to advise on how careers provision for young people and adults could be improved, published its first report.

We called for a culture change in careers provision, including the provision of more career insights and improved access to independent and impartial career guidance, particularly for young people.

In September 2013, the recommendations were formally accepted by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock in his Inspirational Vision Statement.

Since then, careers provision for young people has remained firmly in the spotlight. A six-month review by the council considers what progress has been made by government in implementing the recommendations and practical steps outlined in the council’s 2013 report.

Overall, the findings indicate an urgent need to accelerate progress, particularly in careers support services for young people.

The government plans to support the recommended culture change by promoting stronger links between employers, schools

and colleges.

Ministers indicate this will not be a top-down scheme, but a change of approach building on the good practice that already happens in the best schools and colleges.

Ofsted has challenged schools ‘to raise their game’ with progress made by the inspectorate in providing examples of successful approaches in individual schools.

Colleges have increasingly promoted their careers offer to young people and parents, especially those seeking to attract pupils aged 14+.

The forthcoming revised Statutory Guidance for schools and colleges is expected to make more explicit the role of intermediaries in bringing educators and employers closer together.

Our findings indicate many schools are unsure what to do and need some support in this period of transition.

Industry, education and careers leaders, as well as many across government, recognise the need to tackle skills gaps and mismatch.

The supply and demand for skills is rapidly changing, influenced by technological, demographic and global trends.

The role of employers in stepping up to provide more career opportunities, particularly for young people, is vital for our current and future economy.

The death of the Saturday job, compounded



by limited exposure to work experience, has resulted in a widening gap between young people and the world of work.

The council has reiterated to government the added-value benefits of encouraging a culture change among schools, colleges, employers and career development professionals through the ongoing development of the National Careers Service (NCS), supported by an employer-led Advisory Board.

Since September 2013, closer working links have been established between Local Enterprise Partnerships and the NCS in the re-procurement of careers service delivery in 2014.

Council discussions are under way with the chair and chief executive at the Skills Funding Agency on the option of an employer-led Advisory Board working with the NCS.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the NCS are working with the Career Development Institute to agree next steps for a freely available online directory of independent, impartial and qualified career development professionals.

Labour market intelligence feeding into education and careers support systems is on the increase.

Government has stimulated the careers market, resulting in a plethora of initiatives all keen to work with schools, colleges and employers.

We believe the NCS has a key role in mapping the landscape of careers provision and co-ordinating the efforts of the different organisations engaged in careers work, alongside helping schools to understand where they can access help and support.

We remain fully committed to achieving an all-age careers service that needs to do more with schools in recognition that careers provision must be improved.

Further investment is needed to bring about the culture change that is necessary, particularly if all young people and adults are to benefit from changes in education and the world of work.

*Deirdre Hughes OBE, chair,
National Careers Council*

Could traineeships stem skills shortage problem?

Traineeships are most commonly viewed as a means of taking on youth unemployment, but, asks, Fiona Aldridge, could they also help answer skills shortages in science, technology, engineering and maths?

Traineeships, apprenticeships, higher standards and better qualifications were four key priorities outlined by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock in the recently-published Skills Funding Statement.

But six months into traineeships, a key finding of research published by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace) last week, was that while providers and employers alike recognise the potential of the programme in supporting young people into the workplace, a lack of awareness, particularly among employers, risks jeopardising the positive contribution that traineeships might make.

Traineeships undoubtedly have great potential.

The combination of its three core components — work preparation, a work placement and English and maths support — has been shown to make a substantial impact in enabling unemployed young people to take their first steps into the labour market.

Given the fundamental role of employers in offering work placements, this lack of employer awareness needs to be addressed urgently.

In partnership with the Gatsby Foundation, Niace has been exploring how the traineeship

programme might be an effective means of securing better access to science, technology, engineering and maths (Stem) job roles for young people.

“Traineeships will be most effective if Stem skills strategies are included within local economic and skills planning”

While Stem skills are considered to be critical to future national growth and employment, it is widely recognised that there is a shortage of Stem skills in the UK workforce and that, in particular, more needs to be done to attract young people.

Our research was located in the Dorset local enterprise partnership area, a dynamic concentration of Stem activity.

Bournemouth and Poole College manages an active engineering and manufacturing employers’ forum of more than 200 members and also recently opened a Stem centre.

The purpose of locating the research in a particular Lep area was to explore whether localised planning and implementation would further support the potential of traineeships



to address local labour market needs and meet both current and projected Stem skills shortages.

The overarching recommendation of our research is that traineeships will be most effective if Stem skills strategies are included within local economic and skills planning.

Integration of traineeships (and other programmes such as apprenticeships) into these plans will enable targeted and co-ordinated local implementation, avoiding duplication of activity by different learning providers and introducing a systematic approach to engaging Stem employers, while also ensuring that the content and delivery of traineeships at a local level, meets their skills needs.

By adopting such an approach, providers will benefit by directly engaging local

Stem employers in discussions about the contextualised maths provision that they would like to see delivered through traineeships.

This will also mean they are able to work more easily with employers to plan and arrange work placements that provide young people with the most meaningful and worthwhile experiences of Stem workplaces, at the start of what we hope would be lasting and fulfilling careers.

We believe that Stem-focussed traineeships have the unique potential to benefit young people, employers and the economy — both at a local level and nationally.

If planned and delivered effectively, they have the potential to provide clear progression pathways to Stem jobs, meet employers’ Stem skills needs and contribute to social inclusion and growth agendas.

The enthusiasm is most definitely there. All of the employers we spoke to could see the potential positive impact traineeships could have on, in particular, addressing local labour market shortages of skilled workers.

The big challenge is that this potential will not be realised while the majority of employers are still unaware of the traineeship programme.

Hopefully National Apprenticeship Week started the process to give traineeships a similar level of attention as apprenticeships.

*Fiona Aldridge, head of learning for
work, National Institute of Adult Continuing
Education*

FE Week campus round-up

sponsored by

PEARSON



Inclusive Multisport Club members Denise Vaughn-Watkins, aged 52, Sebastian Jacobs, 28, Daniel Oliver, 18, Joshua Mackenzie, 23, and Rohan Chelliah, 26, show off medals they were awarded for taking part in a five-a-side tournament. Inset: Club members with Chelsea coach Max Ashely (far right)

Disability sports club wins government recognition

Kingston College has been recognised for encouraging special needs students to play sport.

The Inclusive Club, which has 25 members with a range of physical and learning disabilities, was launched by the college a year ago.

Its success has now led to the college being given official accreditation by Interactive, a government agency which recognises providers that encourage people with

disabilities to play sport.

The club's members enjoy weekly sessions with football coaches from Premier League football club Chelsea and play in five-a-side tournaments against special needs sides from other colleges. They have also had tennis lessons at Surbiton Tennis club.

Carolyn Sheppard, sport co-ordinator at the college, said: "The group has been a huge success and we're delighted with the accreditation."



Bethany Colburn holding her apprenticeship of the year trophy. Inset from left: Bethany working on the Dornier 17. Right: The Dornier 17 being hoisted out of the sea with a crane.

Awarded for restoration work on Second World War plane

An engineering apprentice from City of Wolverhampton College has been awarded for her conservation work on a German Second World War bomber.

Bethany Colburn, aged 19, is serving her apprenticeship with the Royal Air Force Museum, in Cosford, and City of Wolverhampton College.

She was named Wolverhampton apprentice

of the year by the local Rotary Club, for her work restoring parts of a German Dornier 17 aircraft that was shot down 72 years ago during the Battle of Britain and was retrieved from the English Channel in June last year.

Bethany said: "I was delighted to have been chosen as apprentice of the year. It's great to gain recognition for the conservation work we do."

Harriet's shark dive leads to work placement at aquarium

The thought of diving into a shark-infested tank would be enough to bring most out in a cold sweat, but for Hopwood Hall College student Harriet Barker getting her feet wet with eight of the predators was just another exciting step towards a career in wildlife conservation, writes Paul Offord.

Fancy taking a swim with some fearsome tiger sharks, or perhaps a nurse shark and a black tip reef shark? What about getting up close and personal with a white tip reef shark and a bamboo shark?

For most, including those who've never even seen Jaws, the answer would be no.

But 18-year-old Harriet Barker jumped at the chance.

The level three animal management student at Hopwood Hall College, in Rochdale, was offered a two-month placement at the Blue Planet Aquarium, in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, after taking the plunge with two impressed safety divers.

"There were about eight sharks in there," she told *FE Week*.

"They were tiger sharks, a nurse shark, a black tip reef shark, a white tip reef shark, and a bamboo shark — which are all potentially dangerous to humans.

"There was also a spotted eel swimming around and they can dangerous too — but the professional divers

communicated with me throughout using hand signals and I knew 100 per cent that they would be able to get me out if I got into any problems."

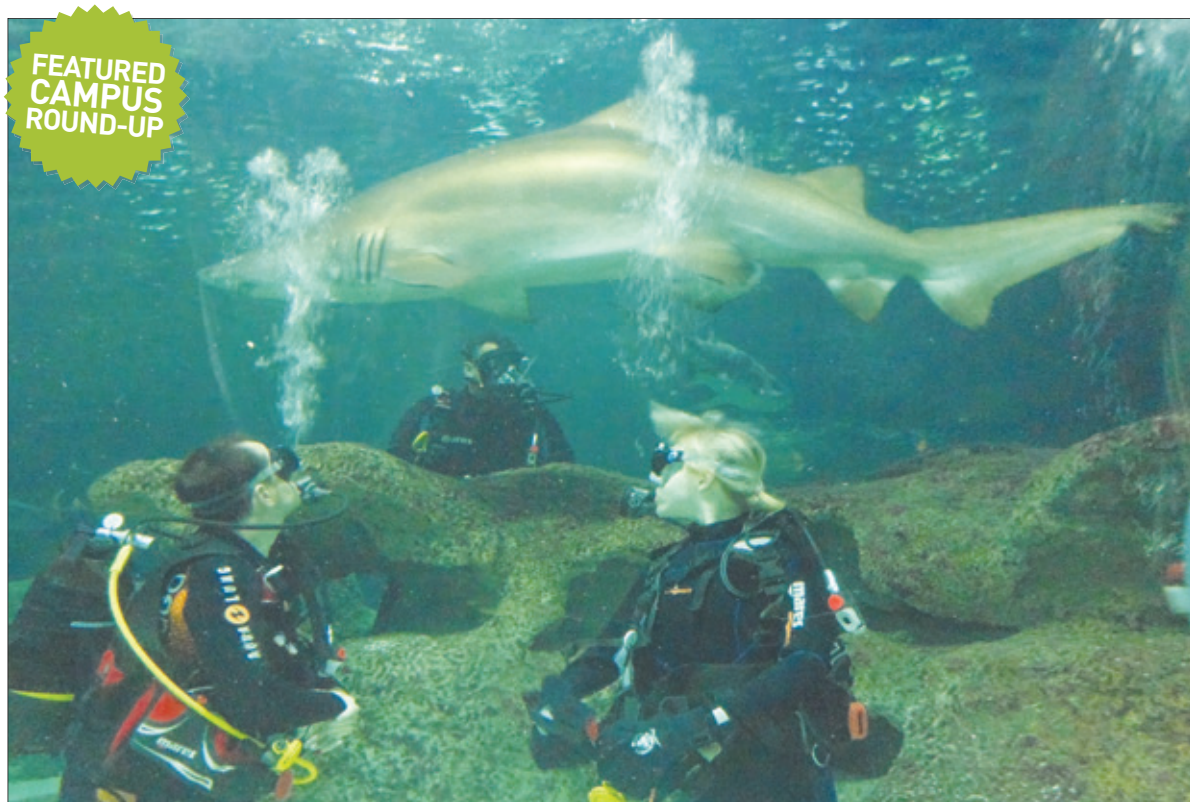
Harriet, a qualified advance open water diver, also went on a tour of tour of the aquarium and further impressed staff.

She said: "I kept asking really awkward questions, like: 'What is the PH or salt content per gallon of water?'"

"The man showing me around asked if I was studying marine biology. I said it was part of my college course and I was just interested because I love marine animals.

"He must have been quite impressed as he took me to meet his boss and they asked if I wanted to do a work placement."

Sarah Whitehurst, life sciences lecturer at the college, said: "Harriet was very brave to swim with sharks, but I think it's her thirst for knowledge that keeps on pushing her to find out more about the animals around us."



Harriet Barker (front right) with two safety divers looking up at a shark at Blue Planet Aquarium. Inset: Chris Kelly, an animal care technician at the college, with Harriet



The placement, which Harriet said she was likely to complete over the summer, will include feeding sharks, eels, and other marine wildlife including sting rays, star fish, and sea horses. But taking a walk (or a dive) on the wild side is nothing new for Harriet.

Her interest in wildlife was sparked ten years ago when her mum, Joanne, aged 37, and dad, Paul, 40, took her to an animal sanctuary in Sri Lanka, and later a

safari in South Africa.

Her next big adventure will be volunteering in July and August at a South African game reserve, where she will track endangered animals and join gamekeepers in protecting them from poachers.

Harriet is in her final year at college and has been given an unconditional offer to a study wildlife conservation and zoo biology degree at Salford University.

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

Lancashire's Myerscough College has appointed Steve Rigby (pictured) as its new corporation chair. He succeeded Ian Higginbotham, who stepped down at the end of last year after four years at the helm. Mr Rigby's background is in public service and he spent 34 years as a senior manager, having qualified as a teacher. He said: "I am very pleased to have been given the opportunity to chair the corporation and contribute with my colleagues to the management of Myerscough College."



"With the varied experience in education and business that the governors have, we hope our collective background will help set the strategic priorities for the college. "My wife also works in FE and one of my daughters is lecturing at Leeds University so I appreciate the challenging job of teaching, together with the various support roles within the college and recognise the privilege of assisting young people. "The college governors are currently reviewing how the board and committees operate to make sure we consolidate the reputation of Myerscough and assist the hard-working staff. To this end, I feel we need to improve our formal links with staff and students and look forward to

determining how this can be done. "We need to make sure that we are well positioned to respond quickly to [future] changes to funding mechanisms and shifting priorities so that our students receive the very best education and training." Melanie Radford (pictured) has also been officially appointed as principal of the new UTC Cambridge, which is due to open in September. Ms Radford, who has already been acting principal for four months, will lead the specialist science college for 14 to 19-year-olds. She is a former scientist who worked in blood transfusion services in Australia, and has worked in education and training for 20 years in both the UK



and the United States. The UTC, which will teach biomedical and environmental science and technology, is sponsored by Cambridge Regional College and Cambridge University Health Partners. She said: "Cambridge is a world class centre of innovation and learning. It is fitting and necessary that UTC Cambridge will utilise this excellence to inspire future leaders in medical and environmental science." The 670-student UTC's learning programme has been developed with employers such as Wellcome Sanger Trust, Napp Pharmaceuticals and the Medical Research Council who will deliver a series of real-world Challenge Projects.

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college or training provider, please let us know by emailing news@feweek.co.uk

Jobs



Colchester Institute is one of the largest FE and HE vocational education providers in Essex. We are recruiting for two key management positions:

HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS: CREATIVE ARTS

Job ref: 13-068
Salary circa £37,700 - £41,200 pa

To take responsibility for the operational management and strategic development of the business and commercial activity within the Faculty, you will undertake line management; liaise competently and professionally with employers and business support; identify funding streams and oversee delivery against budgets.

With a relevant degree and experience in arts management you will demonstrate effective staff management; analyse strategically to make decisions and plan effectively to solve problems and generate new initiatives. Subject expertise in Creative Arts and knowledge of FE and HE funding policies is preferred.

MARKETING & ADMISSIONS MANAGER

Job Ref: 13-072
Salary circa £41,200 - £45,000 pa

To develop and manage the marketing function and lead on the Information and Admissions Service, including international student recruitment. You will develop and deliver the annual marketing plan including social media; advertising and sponsorship; production of prospectuses and print management; the College website; and leading on College events.

With experience of management in a marketing role and being an ambassador among external stakeholders you will develop strategies, plans, monitor performance and deliver results within budget. Educated to degree level, the ability to provide inspirational leadership and influence colleagues at all levels are essential.

A job description and application pack can be obtained from our website: www.colchester.ac.uk. Applications, by CV if preferred, should be emailed to jobline@colchester.ac.uk.

Closing date 18th March 2014



Jobs

Are you ready to join the fastest growing Apprenticeship organisation in England? Aspire Achieve Advance are recruiting...



If you have first-hand experience of delivering Apprenticeships, are able to cope with a fast pace of work and love influencing positive change we want to hear from you. www.3aaa.co.uk

We are recruiting for the following roles in our Academies nationwide:

- Academy/Centre Managers
- IT Trainers
- IT Assessors



We are also recruiting for the following Head Office/National roles:

- Regional Operations Managers
- Head of Quality and Learning
- Project Leader for Learning Technologies



To apply please forward your CV along with a letter outlining your experience relating to the role: recruitment@3aaa.co.uk

Interviews will be conducted in March 2014 | Competitive salaries
We are an equal opportunities Employer | Twitter: @3AAA_UK, @NITPapprentice, @APP_England

Bedford - Birmingham - Brighton - Bristol - Cambridge - Chelmsford - Derby - Guilford - Leeds - Leicester - Liverpool
London - Manchester - Milton Keynes - Newcastle - Nottingham - Oxford - Reading - Sheffield - St Albans - Tamworth

FE Associates MIS Consultants

FE Associates is the leading choice for colleges requiring interim managers at all levels as well as providing MIS consultancy support. We have an exceptionally strong MIS and IT team with an impressive range of specialist skills in data analysis and interpretation.

We are currently expanding in response to sector demand for MIS support. Consequently, we are inviting applications from suitably qualified and experienced professionals to join our team of full-time employed consultants and self-employed associate consultants.

You will be highly motivated and flexible, have strong, technical MIS skills and be experienced in all aspects of funding and data quality, gained in further education and training.

Applicants need to be prepared to travel around the UK and stay away from home when required. In return we offer a base salary of £42k plus a range of benefits including performance related pay, as part of a competitive remuneration package.

Closing date for applications is Friday 28th March.

For an informal chat, please call Mike Craddock on 01823 337655.

To apply please send your CV with covering letter to recruitment@feassociates.com



Haringey Sixth Form Centre

Haringey Sixth Form Centre is now 7 years old and became a 16-19 Converter Academy in March 2013. As one of the main providers of Post 16 Education and training in the London Borough of Haringey, it has successfully delivered on its mission to enable young people to achieve their aspirations regardless of their starting points.

The Centre is now entering an exciting stage of its development and the Governing Body are keen to build on this platform by appointing two dynamic and transformational leaders to take strategic responsibility for the 'business' support functions of the Centre's work. These posts arise in consequence of the retirement of the current post holder.

Director of IT & Facilities Salary £50,000 to £54,000

Reporting to the Principal, you will be charged with developing and delivering an IT strategy that meets the high expectations of an ambitious Sixth Form Centre. You will be a key member of the Centre's Senior Management Team with responsibility for developing leading edge, sustainable IT services to the whole of the Centre whilst achieving efficiency and value for money. As Director of Facilities you will be responsible for the development of the facilities management functions so as to provide an excellent student learning environment and to maximise usage through lettings and contracts for shared use.

If you would like to discuss aspects of either of these posts before making an application, please call the Principal's PA to make an appointment on 020 8376 5901.

Director of Finance & Human Resources Salary £50,000 to £54,000

Reporting to the Principal you will provide strategic leadership and development for the Centre's Finance and HR teams, with responsibility for strategic financial planning, budgeting, financial control, reporting and procurement. As Director of HR you will be responsible for the full range of HR and payroll services as well as leadership in policy development and implementation.

Closing date for both of the posts :
noon 14th March 2014.

Download the application pack from our website.
www.haringey6.ac.uk

Alternatively:
E: jobs@haringey6.ac.uk
T: 020 8376 5877



FREE



ADVERTISING

FROM MARCH UNTIL THE END OF AUGUST 2014, FE WEEK ARE OFFERING FREE RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING FOR ALL ENGLISH AND MATH TEACHING AND LECTURING ROLES.

FREE QUARTER PAGE PRINT ADVERT **WORTH**
£1,280

FREE ONLINE FEATURED ADVERT **WORTH**
£250

Contact Hannah Smith for more info –
Hannah.smith@feweek.co.uk or 020 81234 778

T&C's apply. FE Week reserve the right to honour this offer at any time and for any reason.



Business Growth & Development Manager (Post Ref: D0114)
Fixed Term to July 2015
£32,000 - £35,000

Stockton Riverside College is seeking to appoint a Business Growth and Development Manager to provide businesses within the Stockton and surrounding areas with effective strategic support and guidance in relation to growth opportunities, current and future staffing requirements and organisational skills development.

You must have worked in Business Development at a senior level and have experience of working with employers strategically to identify their business needs and future requirements. Experience of undertaking detailed Organisational Needs Analysis is essential.

To apply, and for further information, please visit www.stockton.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is Friday 14 March 2014





To advertise with us call
Hannah Smith on
020 81234 778



MARKETING AND STUDENT SERVICES MANAGER
£46,000 PER ANNUM FULL TIME
REQ000300

An opportunity has arisen to join this “outstanding” College at a key time in our development.

This role will be central to the promotion of the new University Centre building planned for the Farnborough site, assisting with expanding student numbers both at degree level and the 16-18 market, and enhancing the student experience from application stage to successful course completion and beyond.

Applicants must hold a marketing qualification, ideally at degree level; have significant experience of operating at a senior marketing level, in an education environment, preferably within Colleges or Universities. They will also be confident at developing and implement the marketing strategy and managing a diverse team of staff.

The College can offer a range of excellent benefits together with a stimulating and exciting environment to work in.



Farnborough College of Technology is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

CLOSING DATE: 19TH MARCH 2014

TO APPLY:

Please go to our website (www.farn-ct.ac.uk) for further information or to apply online.

Principal & Chief Executive

Salary c.£110,000, full-time, permanent

Appointment for 1st September 2014

Chelmsford College is a good college that aspires to excellence. We have seen continued improvements to outcomes for learners and strong growth in recent years, enabling significant investments to be made in our estate and facilities and the creation of modern and innovative learning environments.

We are looking for a passionate and dynamic leader to continue our drive towards excellence. With a dedicated board of governors, professional and enthusiastic staff and a clear vision for the future, we have a solid foundation to build upon.

As Principal and Chief Executive, you will lead our ambitious strategy to become an outstanding provider of education and training and to develop a reputation for excellence within the local community. With extensive knowledge of the FE environment and experience as a senior manager, you will need to be an inspirational leader with strong partnership and entrepreneurial skills.


To arrange an informal discussion with either our Chair of Governors, Janice Maclean, or current Principal, David Law, please contact Jo Saward on 01245 293002.

Closing date for applications 9am Friday 28 March 2014.
Interview dates: Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 April 2014.




For an application pack and further information about Chelmsford College, please visit website: www.chelmsford.ac.uk/principal or contact Mike Tadman, Director of Human Resources on 01245 293071 or email: mike.tadman@chelmsford.ac.uk

The successful candidate will be expected to undertake an enhanced DBS check.

Chelmsford College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment.



unlocking potential





scan for website link

BISHOP BURTON College

Curriculum and Learning Manager: Sport

Salary: £43,249 pa Permanent

Bishop Burton College's prestigious sporting facilities are the finest and most complete in the region. The new facilities are designed to meet all the sports and leisure needs of the local community as well as providing training facilities for sporting centres of excellence. We are home to the Hull FC Academy; a Rugby World Club 2015 approved training venue and a Regional training and Performance Centre for Modern Pentathlon and Archery GB in addition to a number of other high-profile professional clients that use Bishop Burton. Of course, we are also one of the largest land-based Colleges in the UK.

We now wish to appoint an inspirational academic manager to work with our Director of Sport to take this key area of the College forward to its next stage of development. The role will involve the organisation, management and leadership of the Sport & Public Services curriculum team, ensuring high quality teaching and learning, effective management of budgets and resources and of course the success of our 402 further and higher education students.

We have recently been found to be Outstanding by Ofsted for "Outcomes for Learners", so you will know we set ourselves high standards. If you enjoy working within a challenging but rewarding environment, you have a good blend of sport industry and academic experience and qualifications, you are an excellent communicator and are driven by helping people to succeed, then we'd like to hear from you.

In return, we offer candidates a great career development opportunity, final salary pension scheme, 35 days holiday, free parking, comprehensive training and development opportunities and world class facilities.

To apply online please visit our website: www.bishopburton.ac.uk or email: great.jobs@bishopburton.ac.uk. Any queries, telephone **01964 504190**.

Closing date: 21st March 2014

Interview date: 4th April 2014

No Agencies.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS check will be carried out on the successful candidate. Bishop Burton College is committed to Equal Opportunities for all.



To advertise with us call Hannah Smith on
020 81234 778



navigate

WE'RE
INVESTING
IN

POTENTIAL

Deputy Principal & competitive + relocation, Ashton-under-Lyne

With a considerable capital investment programme underway that will see the building of two new Advanced Learning Centres and plans for further phases, we believe we are creating the blueprint for long-term success and supporting the economic well being of our community for future generations. Tameside College is a place where students flourish - and you can too. If you share our wholehearted focus on students and the transformational effect that Further Education can have we'd like to hear from you.

Tameside is a dynamic and ambitious college and our new Deputy Principal will be the driving force behind our Quality and Curriculum agendas. Building on our reputation for high performance, you will ensure that we continue to offer a diverse and responsive curriculum, closely aligned to the skills needs of the local and regional economy, and make the most of our substantial investment in the estate. Experience of leading on quality in a high performing college will be essential as will your ability to shape and grow a curriculum that anticipates and responds to demand and need. Your instinctive attention to detail in managing performance and quality will be complemented by an outward focus and you should be an effective ambassador for the College, able to influence in a range of partnership settings. As a strategic thinker with the ability to deliver long-term objectives as well as immediate priorities, this post will provide you with the perfect preparation for a Principal's position.

Visit www.tamesidedp.co.uk to find out more or contact Trudy Searle or Mike Galloway at Navigate on **07791 090141/ 07765 595758**. Closing date: 28 March. Initial interviews: between 7th and 25th April. Final interviews: 6 & 7 May.



www.exe-coll.ac.uk

Exeter College is a large, thriving and growing tertiary college which places teaching, learning and student success as our top priority. We enjoy an excellent regional reputation. The College was judged as outstanding by Ofsted in a private “no notice” inspection in 2012, and again in a public inspection in 2014. In recent years the College has won a number of prestigious awards, including featuring twice in the Sunday Times “Best Places to Work” surveys.

We depend upon exceptional people to sustain our outstanding performance and therefore offer excellent conditions of employment and extensive professional development to all our staff.

Head of Faculty – Healthcare, Childcare and Public Services







£44,223 - £49,121 per annum

The faculty comprises a range of courses from those for 14-16 year olds, fulltime 16-19 programmes, work based provision, HE and courses and training for employers within the sector. The provision has recently been recognised as Outstanding, by Ofsted, is growing and continuing to diversify. The team are passionate about delivering exceptional teaching and learning, which provides the very best progression opportunities for the learners.

The faculty is set to embark on a new phase in its development. The focus is to further match our learning offer to the needs of the sector, continue to improve the quality of the teaching and learning and to achieve recognition through the successes of our learners. Your links with the sector will be critical to the continued development of both work based delivery and full cost work.

You will be creative, inspirational and driven to provide the very best learning and training. You will also need to have the potential to become a great leader and manager of the faculty and able to contribute to this high performing college. For further details and an application form please visit our website www.exe-coll.ac.uk. We do not accept CVs or late applications, no agencies please.

Closing date: Noon, Wednesday 19th March 2014
Interview date: Thursday 27th March 2014



exeter college

Join us on our journey to world class



The Cornwall College Group is looking for outstanding leaders with a passion to deliver a world class future for our learners. If you are an outstanding leader in your field, with aspirations to become a future principal, then you should consider a move to a pioneering and enterprising college, situated in the beautiful county of Cornwall.



ENTERPRISE

EMPLOYABILITY

EXCELLENCE

We are looking to appoint to our Senior Team, to build on our strong foundations and create an environment that will cultivate excellence, enterprise and employability across our localities.

Opportunities include:

- Director of Business & Professional
- Director of Cultural & Visitor Economy
- Director of Health & Well Being
- Director of Science & Natural Environment
- Head of College (Mid Cornwall)
- Head of College (West Cornwall)
- Head of People Development

These roles require outstanding strategic leadership, the ability to continuously improve and a proven track record in delivering inspirational, responsive and innovative approaches to education and training, to make learning work.

We offer on-going development and progression within our large and innovative Group. We value expertise and potential, and are prepared to offer a competitive remuneration package for the right candidates.

If you require further information, please visit our website www.cornwall.ac.uk/jobs or call Debbie Wilshire, Deputy CEO on 01726 226525.



CHARITY BY STATUTE



COMBINED UNIVERSITIES
IN CORNWALL

IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY



157
group



THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION
2013

A 'not to be missed' introductory workshop for enrolment and MIS staff; that will help see how a small change in the ILR can have a big impact on the funding generated.

AUTHOR OF THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FUNDING APPRENTICESHIPS, AND BOTH THE HANDS-ON GUIDE TO POST-16 FUNDING AND THE HANDS-ON GUIDE TO POST-16 PERFORMANCE AND DATA

YORK
WED 19 MARCH
13:30 - 16:30PM

13:00	Registration	15:30	Highlighting the most funding sensitive parts of the ILR for EFA and SFA funding
13:30	The basics of EFA per learner and SFA (incl. apprenticeships) matrix funding	16:00	Top tips on using related tools, including FIS, LARs, DSATs and other uses for the ILR, including the QSR, NSRT, MLPs, SARs and the SFR
14:15	The relationship between funding and the ILR specification (13/14 and 14/15)	16:30	End
15:15	Refreshment break		

At no risk - book today to secure your place, cancellations accepted upto seven days in advance of event incur no charge.

BOOK YOUR PLACE TODAY
VISIT WWW.LSECT.COM OR CALL 020 81234 778

Lsect
Learning & skills ~ events
consultancy and training

To find out more visit www.lsect.com

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

**Spot the difference
to WIN an *FE Week* mug!**



Spot five differences. First correct entry wins an *FE Week* mug. Text your name and picture of your completed spot the difference to 07969 166 374.

Last week's spot the difference winner was Jill Whittaker, managing director of West Sussex-based HIT Training.